asylum doctor as busy and officious expert. Robert and his fellow inmates, as inmates of insane asylums probably always do, try to get out by convincing the doctor that "were all right." The doctor, either very brusque or very conceited (or both), "knows were crazy at first sight" [sic] and dismisses Robert and his friends with a placebo of "saults."

Everyone has a "good excuse," the author included. He tells his to the white-coated Dr. Campbell, who answers "its no use." Robert bleakly observes that it is easier to get in than to get out. The doctor "laughs as he passes by" and the "lunies have a good cry." The doctor/patient relationship is analogous to that between performer and audience, or spectacle and spectators as "Every morning Campbell takes a trip / To see us lunies on the rip." Robert's diction reinforces the analogy, as he and his companions "perform" for the authorities the very antics the latter have come to "reform" them of. The reference to Dr. Campbell's spectacles is significant in the context. Robert's praise is mockingly familiar, as he observes that women find Dr. Campbell "cute," and that he himself would like to have him for a pet. If it had really been so obvious, perhaps he would not have had to say so. Dr. Campbell is the sort of man who laughs at his own "jest of some kind" and is "very clever in his mind" -- and "of course [Dr. Campbell] will not deceive." There had to be more dialectic.

That was also the implication of Mr. Alger's assertion of the importance of "personal influence" -- a not very veiled criticism which many patients made in various ways. One of Clarke's "occupational wanderers," Mr. Alger voluntarily admitted himself on November 18, 1911, after a period of hardship and itineracy that brought him from Toronto to Montreal and back. He had finally been hospitalized with T.B., but had left the sanatorium rather than undergo an operation. At the Asylum he was diagnosed as "an incipient case of catatonic dementia praecox, probably induced by physical condition." He finally died of tuberculosis in 1914.

The hardship of his life is as striking as any "delusions" or other eccentricities noted in the "Record." His mother had died when he was only 16 and, while boarding with "mostly medical" students at Queen's University, he found escape in reading. Besides the job in Montreal, there had been various jobs in Quebec City, Buffalo, and New York. When not working, he was in the library. He would walk the 50 miles to Toronto along the CPR tracks, trying to solve "The Problem of the Fourth Dimension."